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How a Protectionist  
became a Free Trader  
An Address, Feb. 9, 1889,  
by Winslow Warren.

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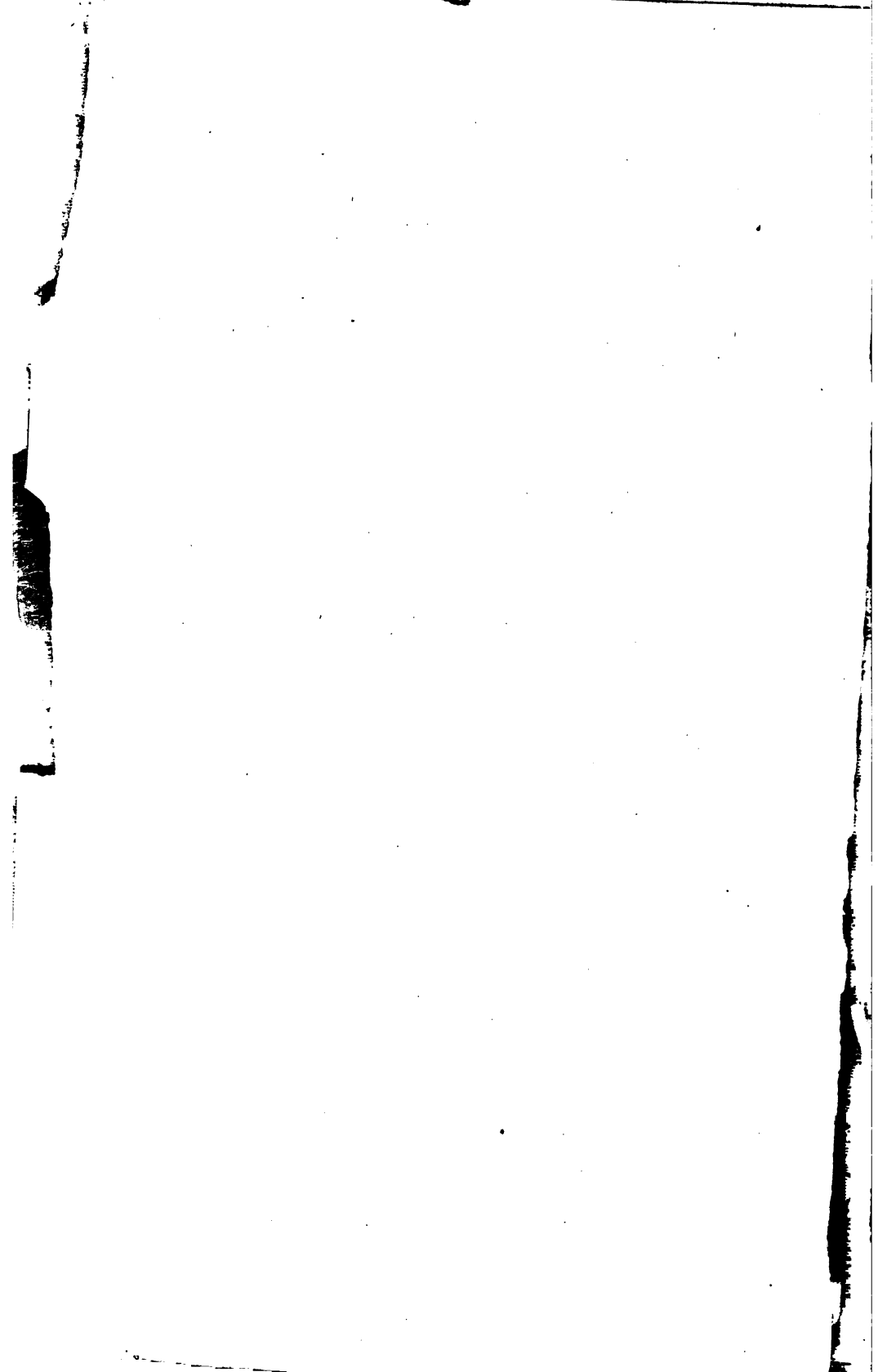
PRESENTED BY

*Dr. S. A. Green*

*26 Jan*

1891





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*From Dr. S. A. Green*

*Jan. 26, 1891*

HOW A PROTECTIONIST BECAME A  
FREE TRADER.

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AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE MASSACHUSETTS REFORM CLUB,

BOSTON, FEB. 9, 1889.

BY WINSLOW WARREN.

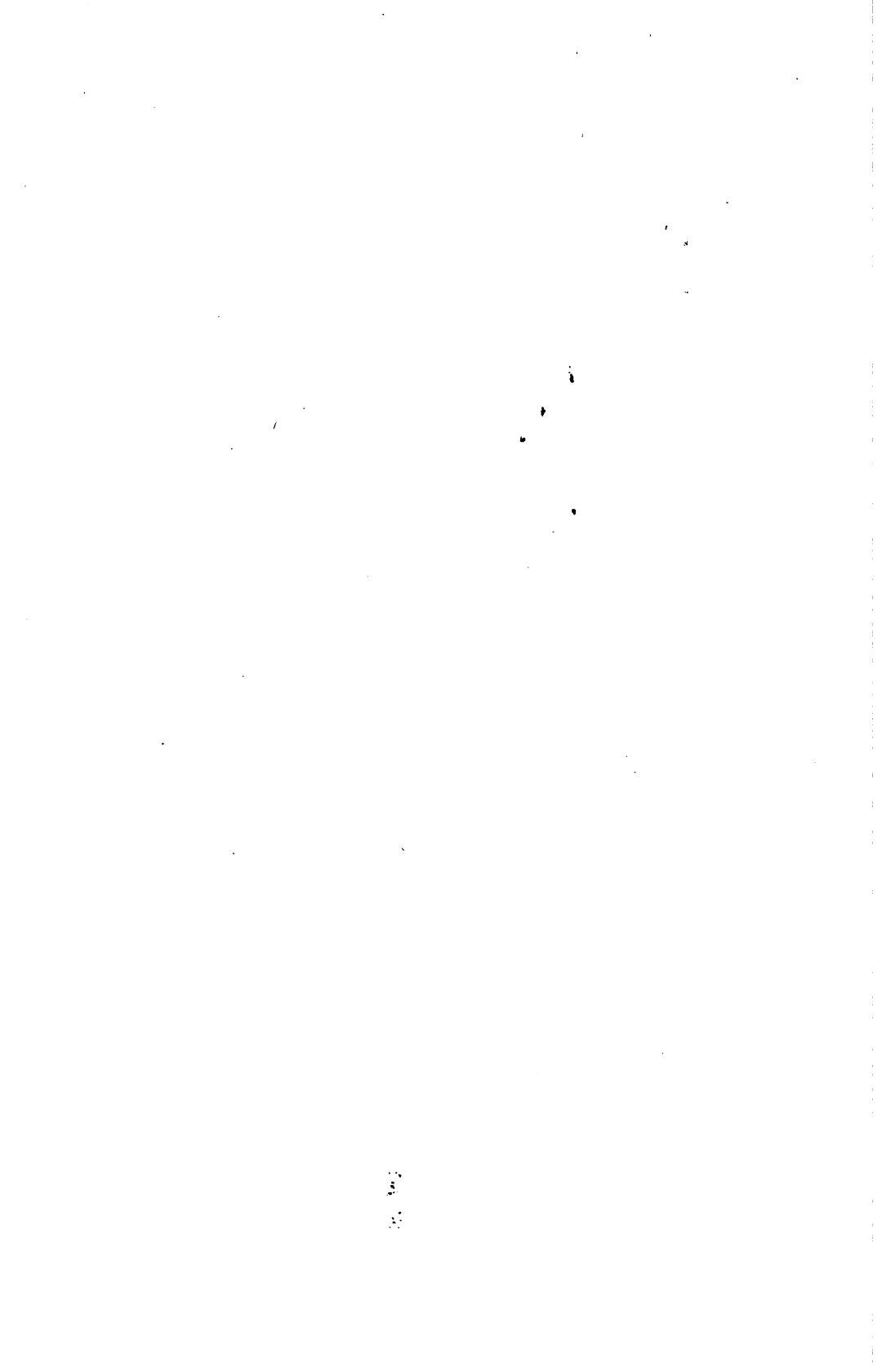
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*University Press.*

1889.





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## HOW A PROTECTIONIST BECAME A FREE-TRADER.

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IN undertaking to put my thoughts upon this subject into writing, I am anxious that it should be understood that I do not appear before you as an expert upon the tariff question, and do not propose to discuss the tariff in detail.

The workings of an individual mind may be erratic, and arguments which affect it may be curiously intermingled with existing material conditions, or colored by political predilections or tendencies, but as I believe my experience to be very similar to that of many others in the past few years, I am impelled plainly and simply to endeavor to state in what way I at least have drifted from my original moorings.

If at the outset I am obliged to be in a measure personal, you will pardon it as necessary to define my original position and make more apparent the change in my thoughts, as well as the manner in which that change was wrought out. Such reference will be brief, and the remainder of the paper will attempt to carry the subject on in an impersonal manner, with a rapid survey of the political history of the tariff question.

Those of you who have read Henry George's clever book upon Free Trade will recall his opening chapter, where he says, as he was sitting at his study window he

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looked across the field at a fierce bull tethered by a rope to a stake. The animal in his fury had wound himself round and round until, his nose held down to the ring-bolt, there he stood and bellowed, without a thought of unwinding the rope or of making a vigorous effort to go free. So it is, he says, with the Protectionists, who having wound themselves round and round the stake, stand and shout for more help, instead of asserting their freedom from commercial restrictions, and relying upon their own manhood and strength for relief.

The other side of the picture, so far as relates to the United States, may be suggested by the action of this country, not so many years since, in sending Commodore Perry with a fleet to compel the Chinese to give up their "home market" and open their ports to the trade of the world. Having adopted in a measure the Chinese policy ourselves, we apparently resolved to make it American, and to secure a monopoly of the article by forbidding its use elsewhere.

I know of no description more applicable to our present position than that first cited, and no act of our national drama more curiously inconsistent with our professed views than that last referred to. They serve here as a sort of text upon which to construct our argument.

My first vote in national affairs was cast in 1860,—it matters not with what party, as it was not cast with any reference whatever to the question of the tariff. I had been instructed at college from Protectionist text-books, under a champion of Protection; by inheritance, so to speak, I had adopted the views of the Webster Whigs, had been brought up as a devoted admirer of Webster, and believed him, as I still do, to have been the master intellect of this country. I had studied the principles of political economy when Protection was in full sway, when the fiery eloquence of Henry Clay still dominated Massachusetts

and the North, and in common with most young men I had fully accepted the Protection views, and was convinced of the truth of the theory and the wisdom of the practice of it in this country. I was more or less acquainted with the text-books on the subject then in vogue, and had followed with interest the Congressional debates, more especially Webster's exhaustive plea for Free Trade, and his subsequent attempt to answer his own arguments upon the theory that changed conditions in New England justified a change of position on the part of its leaders. I am inclined to think that the greatest doubt I then had upon the subject arose from the convincing nature of Webster's first speech, and the feeling that after all the change in his views had the impress of policy more than of conviction. Still, at that time Protection was more a question for the student than for the practical man. The great war-cloud was overhanging the nation, and the fierce contest over the slavery question had for years dwarfed any economic principle from a party standpoint. It is unquestionably true that men at that period accepted Protection as a fact more than they adopted it as a principle, and all their time and thoughts were absorbed by the more pressing slavery question and the war that soon began. The wonderful progress of the nation and its advancement in all material prosperity was ascribed by party leaders and the press to the Protective principle; and experience had not then shown, as it has since, that the older the nation, the greater would be the demands of the protected interests, or that a system adopted as a temporary expedient to build up infant industries in a new country would in process of time be lauded as a thing good in itself and to be made a permanent policy. Clay had expressly taken the position that after a time the tariff should be materially modified, and that manufactures which had shown, or should show, their ability

to stand alone should be left free ; in some of his speeches he used very denunciatory language against those who would violate their pledges by an attempt to make Protection a permanent policy. Professor Bowen, as ardent a Protectionist as any one, and an acknowledged authority in political economy, used these words : —

“ When we have enjoyed, as England has already enjoyed, the benefit of a strict Protective policy for over a century, for the purpose of completing our education in manufactures, then we shall be ready to do what England at last has done, — to throw down all barriers, and to invite the world to compete with us in the application of industry and skill to any enterprise designed to satisfy the wants of man.”

In his recent letter to the Hon. John D. Long, written for but not read to the Protection Meeting in Boston, Professor Bowen shows that *he* has not changed these views, for he says the Protection of the present day is “ tyranny,” which is “ crushing our native industries.”<sup>1</sup> Probably no man in the United States would then have objected to Amasa Walker’s cogent statement, that “ other things aside, the desirability of raising the ‘ infant ’ will depend very much on the length of time and total cost required to bring it to full age and size.” No statesman had yet advanced the theory that Protection for the sake of protection could be a wise, a constitutional, or a just thing; nor was it so plain as it now is, that with a growing country and growing industries there would ever be an “ infant ” on hand, in some sections, for whose benefit protection must be kept up; still less had we reached out to the theory that for the sake of protecting infants, the United States should beget them. The idea that it was important for a nation to diversify its industries and to be able to supply itself with all the necessities in time of war had deeply impressed the people, and had been maintained with great eloquence and

. <sup>1</sup> Professor Bowen’s letter, Nov. 2, 1888.

plausibility, but always with the understanding that time would greatly change the conditions, and that the burden should be removed when the needs of a new country no longer required it. Nor should it be forgotten that the relation of the tariff to wages was not then claimed to be what is now set forth, but much of the early argument had been to quiet the people's apprehension that a tariff might lower wages by interfering with commerce. Every effort was made to show that as the result of a Protective policy not only would manufactures thrive, but our shipping interests be materially fostered and the carrying-trade of the world be ours.

It may be said here — though a trifle premature in this paper — that recent speeches and letters to a club in Boston afford an amusing commentary on the position then taken as to shipping. A few days since, a distinguished Protectionist of the House, Representative Dingley, admitting that our foreign shipping had disappeared, gravely claimed that the tariff had nothing to do with it, and that the remedy was clear (the universal panacea of protection), — to tax it back again by bounties ; while an equally distinguished Protectionist of the Senate, Senator Hoar, wrote in substance that the tariff upon materials for ship-building had made it too costly to build iron ships, and though by no manner of means could it be wise for other industries, in this one its raw material should be free.

I propose briefly to refer to the platforms of the great political parties<sup>1</sup> to show how moderate a protection satisfied the Whig and Republican parties, — if they adopted any platform at all on the subject, — from Clay's time to Lincoln's, and also how the platforms grew in intensity upon the tariff after the war questions were settled and economical questions assumed more importance.

The first national party convention was held in 1832,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.



when the Whigs nominated Henry Clay and adopted a moderate tariff platform, to the effect that it would not be wise at that period to abandon Protection. In 1836 and 1840, with Harrison as a candidate each year, no platforms were adopted. In 1844 the Whigs again nominated Clay, with a platform indorsing a tariff for revenue, discriminating with reference to American labor. In 1848 they adopted no platform; in 1852, one in favor of discriminating by specific duties for the encouragement of American industries. In 1856, the Republicans, with Fremont, none at all upon the tariff question; in 1860, with Lincoln, a moderate Protection platform; in 1864, none at all upon that subject; in 1868, that taxation should be equalized and reduced for the benefit of labor; in 1872, that revenue, *except so much as may be derived from a tax upon tobacco and liquors*, should be raised by duties upon importation adjusted to remunerate labor, promote industries, and the prosperity of the country; in 1876 and 1880, that revenue should be derived from duties adjusted to promote the interests of labor and general prosperity; in 1884, a much more specific platform for Protection; and in 1888, reversing their 1872 platform, that duties should be kept as at present, by repealing the internal revenue taxes upon tobacco and liquors.

So far as the Democratic platforms were concerned, if there was any tariff plank at all it was invariably for revenue only and opposed to monopolies, with the exception perhaps of that of 1868, when the Seymour party resolved for "a tariff for revenue upon foreign imports, and such equal taxation under the *internal revenue* laws as will afford incidental protection to domestic manufactures, and as will, without impairing the revenue, impose the least burden upon, and best promote and encourage, the great industrial interests of the country." One does not expect to find humor in a political platform, but the idea of inci-

mentally protecting industries by taxing them direct is a novel plan, and may be a valuable suggestion to the Protectionist of the future.

The Greeley platform in 1872<sup>1</sup> said: "Recognizing honest but irreconcilable differences in our midst with regard to the respective systems of Protection and Free Trade, we remit the discussion of the subject to the people in their Congressional districts and the decision of Congress thereon." Of the Tilden platform in 1876 I shall speak hereafter, as upon the whole it appears to be the most incisive and compact tariff platform yet adopted by any party in this country.

Finally, it must be borne in mind that up to the time of the Civil War the tariff rates, though varying, had been comparatively low, and assessed upon comparatively few articles; that the experiment of absolute free-trade between the States, with all their diversities of soil, and climate, and industries, and needs, and with their limitless business competition, had been tried upon a much smaller scale than there has been opportunity for since; and that much of the force of the Protective argument for building up new industries was derived from the great difficulties and expense of transportation and communication, creating hindrances which the application of steam, and the telegraph, and the inventions and discoveries of modern times, have entirely changed. Nor had we seen the wonderful growth of the infant industries of the South in the face of the established industries of the North, with all the latter's advantages of capital and experience.

I believe this to be a perfectly fair statement of the position assumed by Protectionists up to 1860, and in brief

<sup>1</sup> This platform was adopted after a violent struggle in the Liberal Convention, in opposition to the report of the Committee on Resolutions, of which Edward Atkinson, Esq., was a member, and only by a combination of the supporters of Greeley and of B. Gratz Brown of Missouri. It came very near breaking up the convention.



of the conditions surrounding the whole matter. It was no wonder then that the receptive mind of youth, in presence of the predominating political and moral question of slavery, acquiesced in Protection without the careful study and investigation, in most instances, to which a changed political and material situation, and increased interest in political economy, have led the young men of the present day.

The Civil War brought new conditions, and placed us face to face with complicated questions of finance. An enormous revenue was required by the Government to carry on the war; and it was urged that an internal revenue tax of large amount should be imposed, and an increase of the tariff rates made, for revenue needed, but, incidentally, in some measure to indemnify the manufacturers for the imposition of these internal revenue taxes.

The Morrill tariff-bill was passed in 1861, largely increasing the rates; and this was amended at various times during or just after the war, always in favor of higher taxes. It was always claimed for the Morrill tariff of 1861, and the higher one of 1864, and equally for the later bills, that they were distinctly revenue and war measures, imposing rates that should be reduced when the expenses of the Government were lessened and the internal revenue taxes gradually dropped. Senator Morrill himself said, in introducing the bill of 1864, "This is intended as a war measure, a temporary measure, and we must *as such* give it our support."

Nothing was too great to ask at that time for war purposes, and the bills were passed by Congress and cheerfully acquiesced in by the people as war measures only, with the incidental protection offered by the very high rates. There was, however, a good deal of opposition to them by members of the Republican party, and some outspoken words were used. I desire to show how plainly Republican leaders, with no question of surplus revenue pending, could

speaking at that time without in any way forfeiting their party standing. The citations I shall make are not new, but they indicate that then some party leaders carried their manhood under their own hats, and that neither the party whip nor "political exigencies" could compel them to swallow their convictions upon questions of such supreme importance.

Henry Ward Beecher said, —

"A tariff for revenue with incidental protection is like beefsteak with incidental strychnine."

Representative Kasson of Iowa said in 1867, —

"What does this bill do? It raises the taxes on lumber, which is so necessary to the Western prairie farmer; on nails, without which he cannot drive his boards on his house or build his fence; and on salt, without which he cannot preserve his beef and pork. There is hardly a thing we consume which this bill forgets to raise the duty upon. Every prominent necessity of life — food, fuel, shelter, and clothing — is embraced, and made more expensive to the consumer throughout the country. Even on boys' pocket-knives the duty is increased about three times, 600 per cent; and yet it is said that this is a tariff for mere protection!"

Remember this was said by a Republican of the tariff in 1867, not in 1888, though it is vastly more true of the recent Senate bill.

Representative James A. Garfield in 1868 said, —

"Unless the tariff men take heed, unless they consent to a rational and considerate adjustment of the tariff, I fear from them, more than from any other source, a reaction, which will bring us by and by into free-trade and all its consequences of evil to the manufacturing interests of the country."

And again in 1871, —

"It is said, 'that coal must take salt by the hand, and they too must take something else by the hand, and thus all interests unite with all forces before they can make a stand before the country. If that remark be true, it strikes a blow at the whole tariff system, — a blow I am not willing to strike.'"

Still further in 1871 and 1872 he said:—

"I am the protection which leads to ultimate free-trade: I am the free-trade which can only be achieved through a temporary protection. I believe that the true course for the friends of Protection to pursue is to reduce the rates on imports wherever we can justify and safety to do. Modern scholarship is on the side of Free Trade."

Senator Grimes, another Republican in 1877 used these pregnant words:—

"The man who opposes the passage of this bill must expect to be defeated. The 'Protectionists,' as they choose to call themselves, have already opened the vista of their triumph which upon the heads of those whose opposition they anticipated. Threats of utter political extinction are hurled against every man who in the exercise of an independent judgment is not prepared to impose upon his constituents the burdens which the various manufacturing combinations demand. That portion of the public press devoted to their interests is rife with charges that 'the Capital is thronged with Free Traders, and that British gold is operating to secure American legislation for British interests.' Every man is condemned in advance who would inquire before he would vote.

"We know what all this means, and so far as I have the ability I am resolved that the people shall know what it means.

"It means that two or three large manufacturing interests in this country, not satisfied with the enormous profits they have realized during the last six years, are determined at whatever hazard to put more money in their pockets; and to this end they have persuaded some and coerced other manufacturing interests to unite with them in a great combination demand for what they call protection to American labor, but what some others call robbery of the American laborer and agriculturist.

"It is the fashion to denounce every man who does not favor a prohibitory tariff as a Free Trader. The charge is made that Free-trade agents are at work to influence Congress, and that our tables

<sup>1</sup> It is said that Garfield remarked to a friend immediately after making this speech, "I did it with a rope round my neck; for I see a constituent in the gallery who will report what I say to the iron manufacturers in my district, and they will strain every nerve to prevent my re-election."

are incumbered with Free-trade documents. Who has seen these Free-trade agents? I have yet to see the first man who was in favor of free-trade, nor have I seen any man who was opposed to a revenue tariff which would incidentally protect such branches of American industry as needed the fostering aid of the Government. It is on questions of detail that we differ. We disagree as to how much money shall be taken from the pockets of Peter to support and enrich his brother Paul."

Were more proof wanted, it could be found in the speeches of Sumner and Wilson, of Hawley, Allison, Sherman, and the Massachusetts Senators Hoar and Dawes. Even James G. Blaine, who is supposed to keep his ear pretty close to the ground for anything popular, urged free lumber for the benefit of our laboring men, and stated in a printed report that there was no difference in our favor between the wages of English spinners and weavers and those of our operatives.

The various tariff bills proposed became the law, and the public mind was so occupied with questions of finance and reconstruction that outside of Congress comparatively little interest was excited, and no line upon the tariff question was drawn between the parties, other than the general tendency of the Democrats towards a low-tariff policy as a sort of party tradition. Nearly every statesman, outside of Pennsylvania, was in favor of considerable freedom for raw materials; and if the modern idea, that there is no such thing as a raw material, had been thought of, it certainly was not treated as worthy of consideration.

The Republican party remained an Antislavery party, the embodiment of war traditions; and heresy upon the tariff question, to any extent, was tolerated in its ranks. In 1876 the Democratic party, under the lead of Samuel J. Tilden, adopted the following pronounced platform,<sup>1</sup> certainly a near approach to a Free-trade platform:—

<sup>1</sup> This plank, it is reported, was drawn by the master hand of Hon. David A. Wells.

"We denounce the present tariff levied upon nearly four thousand articles, as a masterpiece of injustice, inequality, and false pretence. It yields a dwindling, not a yearly rising, revenue. It has impoverished many industries to subsidize a few. It prohibits imports that might purchase the products of American labor. It has degraded American commerce from the first to an inferior rank on the high seas. It has cut down the sales of American manufactures at home and abroad, and depleted the returns of American agriculture, — an industry followed by half our people. It costs the people five times more than it produces to the Treasury, obstructs the processes of production, and wastes the fruits of labor. It promotes fraud, fosters smuggling, enriches dishonest officials, and bankrupts honest merchants. We demand that all custom-house taxation shall be only for revenue."

Yet this plain declaration occasioned no outbreak of party spirit, and the campaign was conducted mainly upon the threadbare Southern issue, except where the questions of administrative reform began to trouble the politicians. No scare was attempted of the manufacturers and workmen, and the result of the conflict showed party lines practically unchanged.

Tariff tinkering had been for years the occupation of Congress, though the bewildered manufacturer, with all his belief in the power of his pet doctrine to increase his profits, had never been sure from year to year what Congress might do with his particular business. Log-rolling upon the tariff had been developed as a fine art in Washington, and the power of associated interests was a convincing argument to many Congressmen, in their hearts impatient at its dictation. To a politician, votes are a telling factor; and the feeling that Protection meant votes, stifled many an attempt to break through the shackles. Changes were made in the tariff from time to time, though commonly delusive ones. The danger of a surplus in the Treasury began to attract attention; but as yet no decisive move was made in a party

way which could disturb the moderate Protectionist, or induce him — except from a purely scholastic standpoint — to dread the future of the tariff question, or to examine more closely the foundations of his accepted faith. An alarm note, however, was sounded in the Presidential election in 1880, when after a Republican defeat in Maine the Republican party leaders, to escape impending disaster, shrewdly shifted the issue, and seized upon hasty remarks of General Hancock, the Democratic candidate, that the tariff was a local issue, to turn the drift of the campaign by appeals to the fears of the workingmen and the cupidity of the manufacturers. Subsequent events have shown that Hancock was wiser than he knew; but neither he nor his party had the sense at that time to defend his position in a proper way before the people.

The Free-trade bugaboo was then worked for the first time as a Republican shibboleth. It was successful, in so far as it temporarily frightened the workingmen and the manufacturers, and secured the election of General Garfield, who curiously enough had gone much farther toward what is now called Free Trade than his opponent; but it had another effect not looked for by its inventors,—it brought thinking men to consider how far a theory which rested upon such arguments could be a sound one, and opened anew the study of existing conditions and the changed attitude of parties and party leaders. A few Free-trade clubs were formed, and more Tariff-reform clubs; and the study was entered upon with zeal as to the workings of English free-trade; the effect of protection upon other foreign countries; the ability of our manufacturers to compete, without restrictions, with free-trade England and low-waged Europe; the true standard of wages; the actual difference in wages between workingmen, estimated by production as well as by pay and cost of living; the immense fortunes rolling up in certain quarters; the money



combinations to debauch Congress and the people; the disappearance of our carrying-trade, and the need of a larger market for our older manufactures,—in fact, the whole length and breadth of a question which had practically slumbered in the mind of the people for more than a quarter of a century. The colleges drifted towards Free-trade; keen speakers and writers attacked the tariff legislation; many manufacturers came to realize that they had been protected to death, and workingmen in various quarters began to question the alleged benefit they derived from protection. The importance of this new drift was little perceived for a while; the argument upon the stump had hardly begun, and open discussion was shunned by the Protectionists with a wisdom begotten of their fears.

In 1882, the tariff question again came before Congress, and a commission of high Protectionists, with a sublimity of satire, was appointed to see how far the tariff could be reduced. After a one-sided examination of the question, they admitted that the tariff was unnecessarily high, and recommended to Congress a reduction of from twenty to twenty-five per cent upon existing rates; but their bill was juggled in Congress, and the decrease, upon the passage of the bill in 1883, amounted to less than four per cent. The people were cheated as usual, but it took time to find it out; and meanwhile the protected interests flattered themselves that the question was settled, as they had often done before. But the warmth of the debate showed that a new interest had been excited, and there was much shifting of ground. Even Samuel J. Randall—who has never been suspected of leaning toward freedom—used words in the debate of 1882 which if uttered now would imperil his Protection standing. I quote from his speech:—

“The existing overflowing Treasury brings a demand for a reduction of the tariff and internal revenue taxes. In my opinion,

in such a condition of our finances reduction of taxation should at once begin. Unnecessary taxation is injurious to the interests of the people in many directions. Government has no justification for the collection of taxes in excess of the sum requisite for the support of its proper administration. *I do not favor a tariff enacted upon the ground of protection simply for the sake of protection.* I doubt the existence of any constitutional warrant for any such construction or the grant of any such power. *It would manifestly be class legislation."*<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, in the same debate, Senator Frye boldly announced the doctrine which Protection seems to be now assuming : —

"If there was no public debt, no interest to pay, no pension list, no army and no navy to support, I still should oppose Free Trade, and its twin sister, 'Tariff-for-revenue-only,' and favor protective duties."

Meanwhile, a majority of the Democrats gradually assumed a defiant tone, more in harmony with the low-tariff attitude of the earlier days of the party, though not yet were political lines drawn clearly upon that subject. Another Presidential campaign was fought in 1884, but the claim of personal magnetism, on the one hand, and the charges of personal corruption, on the other, were the absorbing interest; and the question of civil-service reform was more of an issue than that of tariff reform, though the Free-trade bogie was paraded in quarters where it was available, and Pennsylvania majorities impressed still deeper their high Protective views upon the Republican party.

The Morrison bill was introduced. It was objected to specially as being a horizontal reduction, notwithstanding the fact that a horizontal-reduction bill of ten per cent introduced by Republicans in 1871 had previously been passed by a Republican Congress. Without approving its methods and details, Free Traders and moderate Protectionists wel-

<sup>1</sup> The speech as published contains no italics. — Ed.

comed the bill as affording a basis for a satisfactory reduction. To their amazement it was neither carried nor defeated, but simply smothered by a combination of Republicans and a handful of disaffected Democrats. That Congress was not willing to discuss the subject was a new condition, and again a wave of disgust carried many moderate men still farther toward Free Trade. Again the bill came up, and unmindful of past Republican promises to reduce the war tariff, again a hearing was refused. The tariff reformers slipped away in shoals from the Republican party, though their change was so connected with other causes that few recognized the breach to have been made irreparable by the tariff question. The seed sown long back was, however, beginning to spring up; and thousands whose party ties had been sundered for widely different reasons, in the freer atmosphere of independent thought gradually recast their opinions upon the tariff in presence of their new surroundings.

The Cleveland administration, during the early part of its existence, was largely occupied with purely administrative questions, and with the difficulties appertaining to the application of civil-service reform. Among the people, however, the tariff agitation increased in force; positive Free-trade speeches were made in various quarters, some addressed especially to workingmen; and what was more significant, all the audiences were crowded, and intensely enthusiastic.

Two of these meetings were in Boston. That of the workingmen deserves notice because it was one of the most positive signs yet furnished of the awakening of the people. Curiosity took me to the meeting; and I found an immense audience of mechanics and laboring men, enthusiastic and wide awake. Many of them, too, had evidently given intelligent study to the question, as was shown by their quick response to the utterances of the

speakers, and their very suggestive questions later. It was a people's meeting, under the auspices of no party and with no paraphernalia of presidents and ornamental officers. It was there that Henry George made his clever reply to the Protectionist who asked, with an air of confidence, if he could tell him how the North suppressed the rebellion except by putting on a high tariff, and was told in answer: "Yes, I can recall one way; they sent a lot of guns and a lot of ships and a lot of men south, and gave the Southerners such a magnificent home market that it nearly ruined them."

The surplus in the Treasury, from a shadow, now became a very ugly reality to an overtaxed people; yet Congress seemed powerless to act. The reduction of the tariff had long been promised by both parties; but though most of the internal revenue taxes, to balance which the tariff had been increased, had been swept off the statute books, nothing was done; on the contrary the most preposterous legislation was urged, to get rid of the surplus by extravagance, and postpone the imperative reduction.

The wool-growers threatened those woollen manufacturers favoring free wool; the copper and iron men threatened the free-lumber men; the sugar-growers threatened the free-sugar and salt men; in fact the chain was strengthened everywhere, and the protected industries banded together to defeat action. More than ever it became evident that behind the elected Congress of the people was the congress of protected interests, which, regardless of the demands of consumers and the prosperity of the country as a whole, schemed to continue and increase restriction.

Congress adjourned in 1887 without action, and the hopelessness of opposing these powerful combinations for the tariff as it was, or something worse, upon any other ground than direct Free Trade, became clear to many men before in doubt.

The tariff reformers persistently sought in every way an open discussion of the question of Protection, but secured it finally only by the action of the President of the United States in the remarkable Message which, like most of his public utterances, commanded the attention of his opponents. There was little actually new in the Message, — all its arguments had been stated before, by Republicans and Democrats alike, — but there was a pungency and force in it which carried conviction to the minds of the people ; and what was more, unlike most Presidential messages, it was a courageous and manly appeal to their better instincts, which was certain to be everywhere read and considered. The Protectionists found themselves in a new position : the subject was inevitably before the people at a time when they were intensely interested in it ; and the fact that, owing to the surplus, “ a condition and not a theory ” confronted them, gave the matter a practical turn attractive to the eminently practical American mind. The surplus added little to the argument against Protection, but it was a present evil to be dealt with. Protectionists and Free Traders were alike indebted to the President for his bold stand ; it gave the former a chance to prove their theory sound if they could, and it gave the latter the sought-for opportunity to discuss the whole question with their opponents, before the people.

There were two ways of meeting this Message, — one, the way adopted with the former messages of Garfield and Arthur, to treat it only as a measure for Congressional consideration ; but there was danger in this, as the President had the ear of the people when they were in a thinking mood and demanding positive action ; the other was to raise a political outcry of Free Trade, and carry the subject into the pending election. The latter was adopted, and may possibly have been good politics, though the end is not yet. The people may have been wedded to other idols too many

years for the education of one political campaign to show them fully the falsity of their superstition ; but much has been accomplished in the very strongholds of Protection, and persistent agitation will in time to come do more. There was no approach to Free Trade in the Message, but nevertheless the attempt was made to draw the issue straight between Protection and Free Trade. The subject became, more than ever before, an absorbing study to the people, and an exciting discussion was opened on the stump in all parts of the land. Party lines were now drawn upon the new issue, and resulted in a change of party connections in numberless instances. The early grounds for Protection were almost abandoned ; the Republican party assumed that the tariff as it stood was a thing to be itself protected, and that neither a reduction, nor an increase in the free list, should be allowed until the internal revenue taxes upon liquors and tobacco were first repealed. The home market, instead of a good thing, was held out to be the *only* thing ; a policy was openly urged by leading men that would certainly destroy our little remaining foreign commerce, and the United States was to grow fat upon its own body, safe behind its economic wall from any contaminating trade with barbarian nations outside. The whole theory of Protection now advocated was apparently based upon the idea that " everything that benefits my neighbor injures me, and everything that injures my neighbor benefits me."

A series of object lessons upon the tariff were then presented to the country, without which arguments against it might not for years have been convincing. It was found necessary to bolster up the cause of Protection not only by perversions of the ground taken by its enemies, but by most outrageous appeals to prejudice, cupidity, and fear ; quotations from alleged English newspapers were circulated which when proved to be forgeries were not with-

drawn,—our people were to be convinced that Protection was right because England thought it wrong; circulars were issued by authority to manufacturers, appealing to them with uncommon frankness and truth, as the parties deriving the “most benefit” from the tariff, to subscribe heavily for campaign funds; men honest in other walks of life readily contributed vast sums of money without asking or caring to what they were to be applied,—some freely stating that their contribution was the measure of their personal interest in sustaining Protection; education was derided, and scholars were held up as idealists and dreamers, as they had often been before in attempting reform in the world. Those who remember the appeal to business men in Antislavery times to save their trade with the South and reject the dreams of idealists and preachers, can easily see the parallel.

All this had its effect, and though in the interminable discussion of the campaign the Protection theory was riddled as it never had been before, a success was gained in the electoral college, if not at the polls, the value of which the future only can show.

The price of victory at any rate has been made plain in the United States Senate; it has openly been stated by prominent senators that the debt to the manufacturers must be paid, and so far as it has been in the power of the Republican Senate majority it *has been* paid. The great game of “grab” has received another illustration in the increase of duty on iron and steel, in the increase on wool largely at the expense of the woollen manufacturers, in the increase on firearms and cutlery, in the imposition of a duty upon tin plate, the burden of which must inevitably fall upon the poor, for the sole benefit of a few monopolists, and the new departure of giving a direct bounty to sugar-growers in return for a decrease of the tariff on sugar; *but the duty on champagne and pearls has been lowered.* No

duty was imposed upon *ice* in the bill, though it was an "infant" this season for the fostering care of Protection.

That this bill was an honest attempt to reduce taxation, or legislation for the benefit of the country, no one outside of Congress really believes. A leading Pennsylvania manufacturer wrote to a friend here recently, "I am fully convinced the Senate bill will pass either at an extra session or next session. There seems to be no doubt that the duty [on tin plate] will be increased fully 100 per cent. This is only my opinion, and I think it is right. The eastern iron men contributed liberally to the campaign fund, and they *demand recognition*, and I feel certain that they will get it."

Such utterances as this, and there are many of them, illustrate the change in the minds of the Protectionists. There was a good deal to be said for Protection as a theory for building up or diversifying industries, if its application could be made fairly for the true interests of the whole country; but when it became as now a mere method of repaying campaign subscriptions from the Treasury of the United States, or of fostering favored local industries at the expense of those which had less ability or time to log-roll their claims through Congress, it became what Randall called "manifestly class legislation," and certainly unjust, if not unconstitutional.

Even if it be said that Protection is right in theory and therefore right in practice, it is equally true that the practice must conform to the exact theory, and not be such a perversion of it as we have seen. In other words the Congressional application of Protection is in my view so strangely unlike the original theory, that the Henry Clay Protectionists would hardly recognize their own offspring. The time will surely come when the tax-ridden consumers will also "demand recognition," and that a stop shall be put to legislation for selfish ends under the claim of Protection.



Nearly thirty years of increasing Protection have here been hastily reviewed ; the version I have given might not be accepted by Protectionist authorities, but to my mind, from its new standpoint, it presents with substantial fairness, not the details, but the varying phases of the subject. No man can deny that the change of rates has been steadily upward, and that the demands of Protection are greater to-day than ever before ; but it is equally true that there are now more Free Traders in the country than there have been at any time for fifty years, and that the growth of Free-trade ideas is especially marked among the writers, students, and thinkers of the day, the young men active in affairs, and the workingmen themselves. This combination never yet failed of ultimate success upon any subject, and it is a serious fact for Protection in the future.

Experience, thought, the trend of events, and the utter impossibility of following the present Protection demands have gradually led me to view the whole matter from a position widely apart from that of my earlier days. Conversion seldom comes to men suddenly ; the logic of circumstances combines with the logic of thought to dispel the mists surrounding a particular subject, — and so it has been with Protection. The narration of events I have undertaken, and the impression they have made upon my mind show the change almost imperceptibly wrought out, until in common with many others I have come to the belief that the permanent growth and prosperity of the country, and its purification from many corrupting and degrading influences, would be best fostered under the system of Free Trade, subject only to the limitations imposed by the necessity of revenue, and of a proper regard for capital and labor invested for so many years under a different theory.

If taxes must be laid for revenue, then let us call them taxes, and have the people understand that by no known

process can they make themselves rich by taxation, or shift upon foreign nations the burden which Nature has imposed upon them for their own needs or extravagance. Vicarious taxation will be discovered when the philosopher's stone is a common jewel; but until that time no nation will ever attain to permanent prosperity by tying the hands of its citizens with trade-restrictions.

Yet I would not be understood as advocating immediate Free Trade. So far as action goes, I must accept more nearly Garfield's position, — that Free Trade must come through moderate Protection, and that under existing circumstances a gradual reduction looking toward Free Trade as its ultimate end, is all we can now seek.

If it were an original question, I would favor the raising of revenue upon articles of luxury only, the fewer the better, adding an internal revenue upon liquors and tobacco, and possibly a few other articles. But it cannot come to us as an original question. Years of Protection, years of infancy and swaddling clothes, have made it necessary to consider the interests of capital, which might temporarily suffer by too sudden a change, as well as those of labor, which should not be placed at a disadvantage by the past folly of its employers. As practical men we must, for the present at least, hold our theories, but act under the conditions which surround us, and be content if we can now secure freer raw materials and necessities of life, leaving our position thereafter to be determined by the then situation.

The relative importance of changes in the tariff, to capital and to labor, we can hardly estimate; but, always bearing in mind that an increase of tariff rates may have precisely the same effect upon one set of industries as a decrease may upon another, the probable result of all changes must be carefully studied. While capital has the power better to take care of and adapt itself to circum-

stances, to the wage-earner the question is a very serious one, upon which he gladly seeks for information. The duty immediately before us appears to be the enlightenment of the workingman as to the disadvantages under which he now labors, and as to how much of the existing taxes come from his own pockets.

Certain facts about wages may, I think, be assumed as proved; for instance, that wages as a rule were always higher in America, under high or low tariffs, with or without Protection, than elsewhere, and that they always will be while our comparative advantages of position and government and unsettled domains continue; that wages in high-tariff countries abroad are lower than in Free-trade England; that the difference between wages in America and England are not more marked than between different States and sections of the United States, in the same employments; that high-cost labor generally means low-cost production; that the wages in the unprotected industries are quite as high as in the protected ones; and that the tables of comparative wages published are misleading and of no value, without further knowledge as to comparative amount of production, hours of work, and purchasing power.

If these be facts, as I believe, the wage-earner is vastly more independent of tariffs than he has been led to consider, and has more to gain by relief from the burden of high prices upon necessities of life and by a widening of his field of labor than he has to lose by any change of laws toward freedom.

We may then have ceased to believe that Protection fosters industries; we may believe that the tariff is a tax, and increases the cost of every article upon which it is imposed, either directly, or by reducing the profits upon other articles not taxed, or by destroying industries already in existence; we may believe that tariff has no practical con-

nection with wages, unless in the end to lower them or make them uncertain; we may believe it has destroyed our foreign shipping interests; we may believe that business men who have allied themselves with a political party for profits' sake should share its fortunes in adversity or prosperity, and that a partnership with Government is a *dangerous risk*; we may believe that all tariff is robbery, but all the same we have in our action got to deal with a practical question, and must realize that a wrong which has enlisted on its side enormous interests, untold wealth, and measureless prejudice will be a difficult thing to right. But the time may come when in the face of increasing corruption, by use of money and the development of trusts and monopolies to oppress the people, and of the utter hopelessness of any gradual process of reduction, the people may take all the risks of disaster, and stop the supply of money at the fountain source by the overthrow of the whole scheme. Again I agree with Garfield, that the business men of this country have more to dread from their own grasping selfishness and blind opposition to moderate measures than from any other source.

Should Free Trade become an accepted system, I should have no fears of the ultimate prosperity of the country. Its manhood would then show itself as it has not been able to do under the restrictions imposed upon it; the adaptability of Americans would enable them to grasp the situation, and by economical management, by enterprise and skill, to compete successfully with the world,—for we must bear in mind that a change in this vast empire would necessitate many changes in other parts of the world.

I have endeavored in the short space of this paper to illustrate the effect upon my mind of the workings of the tariff and the swelling demands of its supporters, more by the narration of events than by economic argument. The question of Free Trade and Protection is one of absorbing

interest, and requires more time for its elucidation than I can devote to it here. I can only hope to have recalled to your minds the difference between the Protection of Clay and Webster and the Protection of to-day, under the light thrown upon the system by its practical working in a new country under a most exaggerated form. Its influence upon the morals of the country and its discouragement of enterprise and manly self-reliance well deserve more consideration. I cannot more fitly close than by quoting the words used to me by a prominent Protectionist manufacturer not long since, who said : —

“Our people have much to learn from abroad in the management of their mills. If free-trade, or a large reduction, should come, they would examine their machinery more carefully ; they would find as a rule it was not well kept up ; they would see numberless ways in which the European manufacturer economizes and they do not ; they might revise in various ways their methods of purchasing supplies and selling their goods ; their agents might be more carefully trained and selected. In fact it is a serious question whether the strongest argument against Protection is not to-day that it has bred an extravagant and careless way of doing business, and encouraged inferiority of product and a reliance upon Government assistance which free competition would render impossible.”

## APPENDIX.

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### PARTY PLATFORMS AND THE TARIFF.

1832-1888.

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1832. *National Republican*, HENRY CLAY. — “*Resolved*: That an adequate protection to American industry is indispensable to the prosperity of the country; and that an abandonment of the policy at this period would be attended with consequences ruinous to the best interests of the nation.”

1832. *Democrat*, ANDREW JACKSON. — No platform.

1836. *Whig*, WILLIAM H. HARRISON. — No platform.

1836. *Democrat*, MARTIN VAN BUREN. — No platform.

1840. *Whig*, WILLIAM H. HARRISON. — No platform.

1840. *Democrat*, MARTIN VAN BUREN. — “*Resolved*: That justice and sound policy forbid the Federal Government to foster one branch of industry to the detriment of another, or to cherish the interests of one portion to the injury of another portion of our common country — that every citizen and every section of the country has a right to demand and insist upon an equality of rights and privileges, and to complete and ample protection of person and property from domestic violence or foreign aggression.

*“Resolved:* That it is the duty of every branch of the Government to enforce and practise the most rigid economy in conducting our public affairs; that no more revenue ought to be raised than is required to defray the necessary expenses of the Government.”

1844. *Whig*, HENRY CLAY. — “A tariff for revenue to defray the necessary expenses of the Government, and discriminating with special reference to the protection of the domestic labor of the country.”

1844. *Democrat*, JAMES K. POLK. — Same tariff platform as 1840.

1848. *Whig*, ZACHARY TAYLOR. — No platform.

1848. *Democrat*, LEWIS CASS. — Same as 1840, adding to the last resolution quoted above: “and for the gradual but certain extinction of the debt created by the prosecution of a just and necessary war, — after peaceful relations shall have been restored.”

1848. *Free Soil*, MARTIN VAN BUREN. — “Such a tariff of duties as will raise revenue adequate to defray necessary expenses of the Federal Government and to pay annual instalments of our debt and the interest thereon.”

1852. *Whig*, WINFIELD SCOTT. — “Revenue sufficient for the expenses thereof, in time of peace, ought to be mainly derived from a duty on imports, and not from direct taxes; and in laying such duties sound policy requires a just discrimination, and protection from fraud by specific duties, when practicable, whereby suitable encouragement may be afforded to American industry, equally to all classes and to all portions of the country.”

1852. *Democrat*, FRANKLIN PIERCE. — Same as 1844 and 1848, adding a resolution containing the following words: “And to sustain and advance among them [the States] constitutional liberty, by continuing to resist all monopolies and

exclusive legislation for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many."

1852. *Free Soil*, JOHN P. HALE. — "That no more revenue should be raised than is required to defray the strictly necessary expenses of the public service and to pay off the public debt."

1856. *Republican*, JOHN C. FREMONT. — No tariff plank.

1856. *Democrat*, JAMES BUCHANAN. — Same as previous platforms, adding a resolution containing the following words: "Continuing to resist all monopolies and exclusive legislation for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many."

1856. *Know Nothing*, MILLARD FILLMORE. — No tariff plank.

1860. *Republican*, ABRAHAM LINCOLN. — "That, while providing revenue for the support of the General Government by duties upon imports, sound policy requires such an adjustment of these imports as to encourage the development of the industrial interests of the whole country; and we commend that policy of national exchanges which secures to the working-men liberal wages, to agriculture remunerative prices, to mechanics and manufacturers an adequate reward for their skill, labor, and enterprise, and to the nation commercial prosperity and independence."

1860. *Democrat*, STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS. — Reaffirmed 1856 platform.

1860. *Democrat*, JOHN C. BRECKENRIDGE. — Reaffirmed 1856 platform.

1864. *Republican*, ABRAHAM LINCOLN. — No tariff plank.

1864. *Democrat*, GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN. — No tariff plank.

1868. *Republican*, ULYSSES S. GRANT. — "It is due to the labor of the nation that taxation should be equalized, and reduced as rapidly as the national faith will permit."

1868. *Democrat*, HORATIO SEYMOUR. — "A tariff for rev-



enne upon foreign imports, and such equal taxation under the internal revenue laws as will afford incidental protection to domestic manufacturers, and as will, without impairing the revenue, impose the least burden upon, and best promote and encourage the great industrial interests of the country."

1872. *Republican*, ULYSSES S. GRANT. — "The annual revenue, after paying current expenditures, and the interest on the public debt, should furnish a moderate balance for the reduction of the principal, and that revenue, except so much as may be derived from a tax upon tobacco and liquors, should be raised by duties upon importations, the details of which should be so adjusted as to aid in securing remunerative wages to labor, and promote the industries, prosperity, and growth of the whole country." Also: "Among the questions which press for attention is that which concerns the relations of capital and labor, and the Republican party recognizes the duty of so shaping legislation as to secure full protection and the amplest field for capital, and for labor, the creator of capital, the largest opportunities and a just share of the mutual profits of these two great servants of civilization." And, "It is the duty of the General Government to adopt such measures as may tend to encourage and restore American commerce and shipbuilding."

1872. *Democrat and Liberal*, HORACE GREELEY. — "We demand a system of Federal taxation which shall not unnecessarily interfere with the industry of the people, and which shall provide the means necessary to pay the expenses of the Government, economically administered, the pensions, the interest on the public debt, and a moderate reduction annually of the principal thereof; and recognizing that there are in our midst honest but irreconcilable differences of opinion with regard to the respective systems of protection and free-trade, we remit the discussion of the subject to the people in their congressional districts and the decision of Congress thereon, wholly free from executive interference or dictation."

1872. *Straight Democrat*, CHARLES O'CONNOR. — "We favor a judicious tariff for revenue purposes only, and we are unalterably opposed to class legislation, which enriches a few at the expense of the many under the plea of protection."

1876. *Republican*, RUTHERFORD B. HAYES. — "The revenue necessary for current expenditures and the obligations of the public debt must be largely derived from duties upon importations, which, so far as possible, should be adjusted to promote the interests of American labor and advance the prosperity of the whole country."

1876. *Democrat*, SAMUEL J. TILDEN. — "Reform is necessary in the sum and modes of Federal taxation, to the end that capital may be set free from distrust, and labor lightly burdened. We denounce the present tariff, levied upon nearly four thousand articles, as a masterpiece of injustice, inequality, and false pretence. It yields a dwindling, not a yearly rising, revenue. It has impoverished many industries to subsidize a few. It prohibits imports that might purchase the products of American labor. It has degraded American commerce from the first to an inferior rank on the high seas. It has cut down the sales of American manufactures at home and abroad, and depleted the returns of American agriculture, — an industry followed by half our people. It costs the people five times more than it produces to the treasury, obstructs the processes of production, and wastes the fruits of labor. It promotes fraud, fosters smuggling, enriches dishonest officials, and bankrupts honest merchants. We demand that all custom-house taxation shall be only for revenue."

1880. *Republican*, JAMES A. GARFIELD. — "We affirm the belief avowed in 1876, that the duties levied for the purpose of revenue should so discriminate as to favor American labor."

1880. *Democrat*, WINFIELD S. HANCOCK. — "A tariff for revenue only." — "Free ships, and a living chance for American commerce on the seas and on the land. No discrimination in favor of transportation lines, corporations, or monopolies."

1884. *Republican*, JAMES G. BLAINE. — "It is the first duty of a good government to protect the rights and promote the interest of its own people. The largest diversity of industry

is most productive of general prosperity and of the comfort and independence of the people. We therefore demand that the imposition of duties on foreign imports shall be made, not for revenue only, but that, in raising the requisite revenues for the Government, such duties shall be so levied as to afford security to our diversified industries, and protection to the rights and wages of the laborers, to the end that active and intelligent labor, as well as capital, may have its just reward, and the laboring man his full share in the national prosperity.

"Against the so-called economical system of the Democratic party, which would degrade our labor to the foreign standard, we enter our most earnest protest.

"The Republican party pledges itself to correct the irregularities of the tariff and to reduce the surplus, not by the vicious and indiscriminate process of horizontal reduction, but by such methods as will relieve the taxpayer without injuring the laborer or the great productive interests of the country.

"We recognize the importance of sheep husbandry in the United States, the serious depression which it is now experiencing, and the danger threatening its future prosperity; and we therefore respect the demands of the representatives of this important agricultural interest for a readjustment of duties upon foreign wool, in order that such industry should have full and adequate protection.

"We call upon Congress to remove the burdens under which American shipping has been depressed, so that it may again be true that we have a commerce which leaves no sea unexplored."

1884. *Democrat*. GROVER CLEVELAND. — "It [the Republican party] calls upon Congress to remove the burdens under which American shipping has been depressed; it imposed and has continued those burdens. It professes a pledge to correct the irregularities of our tariff; it created and has continued them. Its own tariff commission confessed the need of more than twenty per cent reduction; its Congress gave a reduction of less than four per cent. It professes the protection of American manufactures; it has subjected them to an increasing flood of manufactured goods and a hopeless competition with manufacturing nations, not one of which taxes raw materials. It professes to protect all American industries; it has impoverished many, to subsidize a few. It

professes the protection of American labor; it has depleted the returns of American agriculture, — an industry followed by half our people.

“Knowing full well, however, that legislation affecting the occupations of the people should be cautious and conservative in method, not in advance of public opinion, but responsive to its demands, the Democratic party is pledged to revise the tariff in a spirit of fairness to all interests. But in making reduction in taxes, it is not proposed to injure any domestic industries, but rather to promote their healthy growth. From the foundation of this Government, taxes collected at the custom-house have been the chief source of Federal revenue. Such they must continue to be. Moreover, many industries have come to rely upon legislation for successful continuance, so that any change of law must be at every step regardful of the labor and capital thus involved.

“The process of reform must be subject in the execution to this plain dictate of justice; all taxation shall be limited to the requirements of economical government. The necessary reduction in taxation can and must be effected without depriving American labor of the ability to compete successfully with foreign labor, and without imposing lower rates of duty than will be ample to cover any increased cost of production which may exist in consequence of the higher rate of wages prevailing in this country. Sufficient revenue to pay all the expenses of the Federal Government, economically administered, including pensions, interest and principal of the public debt, can be got under our present system of taxation from custom-house taxes on fewer imported articles, bearing heaviest on articles of luxury, and bearing lightest on articles of necessity. We therefore denounce the abuses of the existing tariff; and, subject to the preceding limitations, we demand that Federal taxation shall be exclusively for public purposes, and shall not exceed the needs of the Government economically administered.

“Under the long period of Democratic rule and policy, our merchant marine was fast overtaking and on the point of outstripping that of Great Britain. Under twenty years of Republican rule and policy, our commerce has been left to British bottoms, and the American flag has almost been swept

off the high seas. Instead of the Republican party's British policy, we demand for the people of the United States an American policy. Under Democratic rule and policy, our merchants and sailors, flying the Stars and Stripes in every port, successfully searched out a market for the various products of American industry. Under a quarter of a century of Republican rule and policy, despite our national advantages over all other nations, in high-paid labor, favorable climates, and teeming soils; despite freedom of trade among all these United States; despite their population by the foremost races of men, and an annual immigration of the young, thrifty, and adventurous of all nations; despite our freedom here from the inherited burdens of life and industry in Old World monarchies, their costly war navies, their vast tax-consuming, non-producing standing armies; despite twenty years of peace, — that Republican rule and policy have managed to surrender to Great Britain, along with our commerce, the control of the markets of the world. Instead of the Republican party's British policy, we demand, in behalf of the American Democracy, an American policy. Instead of the Republican party's discredited scheme and false pretence of friendship for American labor expressed by imposing taxes, we demand, in behalf of the Democracy, freedom for American labor by reducing taxes, to the end that these United States may compete with unhindered powers for the primacy among nations in all the arts of peace and fruits of liberty."

1884. *Anti-Monopoly*, BENJAMIN F. BUTLER. — "We demand a tariff — which is a tax upon the people — that shall be so levied as to bear as lightly as possible upon necessities. We denounce the present tariff as being largely in the interest of monopoly, and demand that it be speedily and radically reformed in the interest of labor, instead of capital."

1884. *National*, BENJAMIN F. BUTLER. — "The question as to the amount of duties to be levied upon various articles of import has been agitated and quarrelled over, and has divided communities, for nearly a hundred years. It is not now, and never will be, settled, unless by the abolition of indirect taxation. It is a convenient issue, always raised when the people are excited over abuses in their midst. While we favor a wise revision of the tariff laws, with a view to raising reve-

nue from luxuries rather than necessities, we insist that, as an economic question, its importance is insignificant as compared with financial issues: for whereas we have suffered our worst panics under low and also under high tariffs, we have never suffered from a panic, nor seen our factories and workshops closed, while the volume of money in circulation was adequate to the needs of commerce. Give our farmers and manufacturers money as cheap as you now give it to our bankers, and they can pay high wages to labor, and compete with all the world."

1888. *Republican*. BENJAMIN HARRISON. — "We are uncompromisingly in favor of the American system of protection. We protest against its destruction, as proposed by the President and his party. They serve the interests of Europe; we will support the interests of America. We accept the issue, and confidently appeal to the people for their judgment. The protective system must be maintained. Its abandonment has always been followed by disaster to all interests, except those of the usurer and the sheriff.

"We denounce the Mills bill as destructive to the general business, the labor, and the farming interests of the country, and we heartily indorse the consistent and patriotic action of the Republican representatives in Congress opposing its passage. We condemn the proposition of the Democratic party to place wool on the free list, and we insist that the duties thereon shall be adjusted and maintained so as to furnish full and adequate protection to that industry. The Republican party would effect all needed reduction of the national revenue by repealing the taxes upon tobacco, which are an annoyance and burden to agriculture, and the tax upon spirits used in the arts, and for mechanical purposes, and by such revision of the tariff laws as will tend to check imports of such articles as are produced by our people, the production of which gives employment to our labor, and release from import-duties those articles of foreign production, except luxuries, the like of which cannot be produced at home. If there shall still remain a larger revenue than is requisite for the wants of the Government, we favor the

entire repeal of internal taxes, rather than the surrender of any part of our protective system, at the joint behest of the whiskey trusts and the agents of foreign manufacturers."

1888. *Democrat*. GROVER CLEVELAND. — "The Democratic party of the United States, in National Convention assembled, reviews the pledge of its fidelity to Democratic faith, and reaffirms the platform adopted by its representatives in the Convention of 1884, and indorses the views expressed by President Cleveland in his last earnest message to Congress as the correct interpretation of that platform upon the question of tariff reduction; and also indorses the efforts of our Democratic representatives in Congress to secure a reduction of excessive taxation.

"The Republican party, controlling the Senate and resisting in both Houses of Congress a reformation of unjust and unequal tax laws which have outlasted the necessities of war and are now undermining the abundance of a long peace, denies to the people equality before the law, and the fairness and the justice which are their right. Thus the cry of American labor for a better share in the rewards of industry is stifled with false pretences, enterprise is fettered and bound down to home markets, capital is discouraged with doubt, and unequal, unjust laws can neither be properly amended nor repealed. The Democratic party will continue with all the power confided to it the struggle to reform these laws, in accordance with the pledges of its last platform, indorsed at the ballot-box by the suffrages of the people.

"Of all the industrious freemen of our land, the immense majority, including every tiller of the soil, gain no advantage from excessive tax laws, but the price of nearly everything they buy is increased by the favoritism of an unequal system of tax legislation. All unnecessary taxation is unjust taxation. It is repugnant to the creed of Democracy that by such taxation the cost of the necessities of life should be unjustifiably increased to all our people. Judged by Democratic principles, the interests of the people are betrayed when, by unnecessary taxation, trusts and combinations are permitted to exist which, while unduly enriching the few that combine, rob the body of our citizens by depriving them of the benefits of natural competition. Every Democratic rule of govern-

mental action is violated when, through unnecessary taxation, a vast sum of money, far beyond the needs of an economical administration, is drawn from the people and the channels of trade, and accumulated as a demoralizing surplus in the National Treasury. The money now lying idle in the Federal Treasury resulting from superfluous taxation amounts to more than one hundred and twenty-five million dollars, and the surplus collected is reaching the sum of more than sixty millions annually. Debauched by this immense temptation, the remedy of the Republican party is to meet and exhaust by extravagant appropriations and expenses, whether constitutional or not, the accumulation of extravagant taxation. The Democratic policy is to enforce frugality in public expense, and to abolish unnecessary taxation. Our established domestic industries and enterprises should not, and need not, be endangered by the reduction and correction of the burdens of taxation. On the contrary, a fair and careful revision of our tax laws, with due allowance for the difference between the wages of American and foreign labor, must promote and encourage every branch of such industries and enterprises, by giving them assurance of extended market and steady and continuous operations in the interests of American labor, which should in no event be neglected. The revision of our tax laws contemplated by the Democratic party should promote the advantage of such labor, by cheapening the cost of the necessities of life in the home of every workman, and at the same time securing to him steady and remunerative employment. Upon the question of tariff reform, so closely concerning every phase of our National life, and upon every question involved in the problem of good government, the Democratic party submits its principles and professions to the intelligent suffrages of the American people.

*"Resolved:* That this Convention hereby indorses and recommends the early passage of the bill for the reduction of the revenue now pending in the House of Representatives."





